THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV) : (a) to (c) The proposal to upgrade Amritsar airport to international standards was considered in the meeting of the Public Investment Board (PIB) in its meeting held on 18-8-1999. PIB recommended that though the project cannot be justified on grounds of economic viability. However, keeping in view the need of infrastructure development and to exploit the export potential of Punjab, the proposal is being placed before the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA). PIB also directed Airports Authority of India to conduct international passengers and cargo traffic survey which has been now conducted by AAI. A revised proposal to upgrade Amritsar airport to international standards has been approved by AAI Board and will put up to the PIB.

New Guidlines for Helicopter Operations

*351. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the New Aviation Policy will introduce new guidlines for helicopter operations without mixing them up with fixed wing operations;

(b) whether it is also a fact that this will enable them to operate more freely exploiting the advantages inherent in its operations and at the same time maintain high safety standards; and

(c) if so, by when this rationalisation is likely to come into force ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV) : (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The Civil Aviation Policy under formulation envisages a fresh look at the policy framework for helicopter operations, and issue of suitable guidlines in this regard. The draft policy has been widely circulated for views/comments before finalisation.

Strengthening of security at Air-ports

*352. SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA NAHATA :

SHRI AMAR SINGH :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the recent report on airport security has revealed that the Authority has not taken any serious steps to tighten the security on a number of Airports even after the highjacking of IAC Flight No. 814; and

(b) if so, the names of such Airports which are lacking security arrangements and by when remedial steps are proposed to be taken ?